

# End of Life Issues

Wilberforce Academy, Jesus College, Oxford  
6 September 2018

*Peter Saunders*  
*Chief Executive, Christian Medical Fellowship*

# Personal Background

- ❑ Christian Medical Fellowship
  - ~ 4,000 Christian doctors/  
1,000 medical students
- ❑ Care Not Killing
  - ~ 40 UK organisations
- ❑ EPC Europe
  - ten countries



## Female Dutch doctor drugged a patient's coffee then asked her family to hold her down as she fought not to be killed - but did not break the country's euthanasia laws

- The case was referred to the Regional Review Committee in the Netherlands
- It concluded that the female doctor had effectively acted in good faith
- The Netherlands introduced the euthanasia law 17 years ago

By [GIULIA CROUCH FOR MAILONLINE](#)

**PUBLISHED:** 01:50, 28 January 2017 | **UPDATED:** 12:19, 28 January 2017



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A Dutch woman doctor who drugged an elderly woman and then asked her family to hold her down as she fought desperately not to be killed did not break the law, according to medical experts citing the country's euthanasia legislation.

The shocking case was referred to the so-called Regional Review Committee in the Netherlands which admitted that while the case involved some irregularities that merited a reprimand, the female doctor had effectively acted in good faith.

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► 'I married the love of my life': Tom Daley, 22, gushes about new husband, Rustin Lemage





News

## Belgium authorised euthanasia of a terminally ill nine and 11-year-old in youngest cases worldwide



Belgium authorised the euthanasia of three terminally-ill minors, aged nine, 11 and 17. CREDIT: GARETH FULLER/PA

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# Thousands of Euthanasia Killings in Canada

*Wesley J. Smith*

August 4, 2018, 4:45 AM

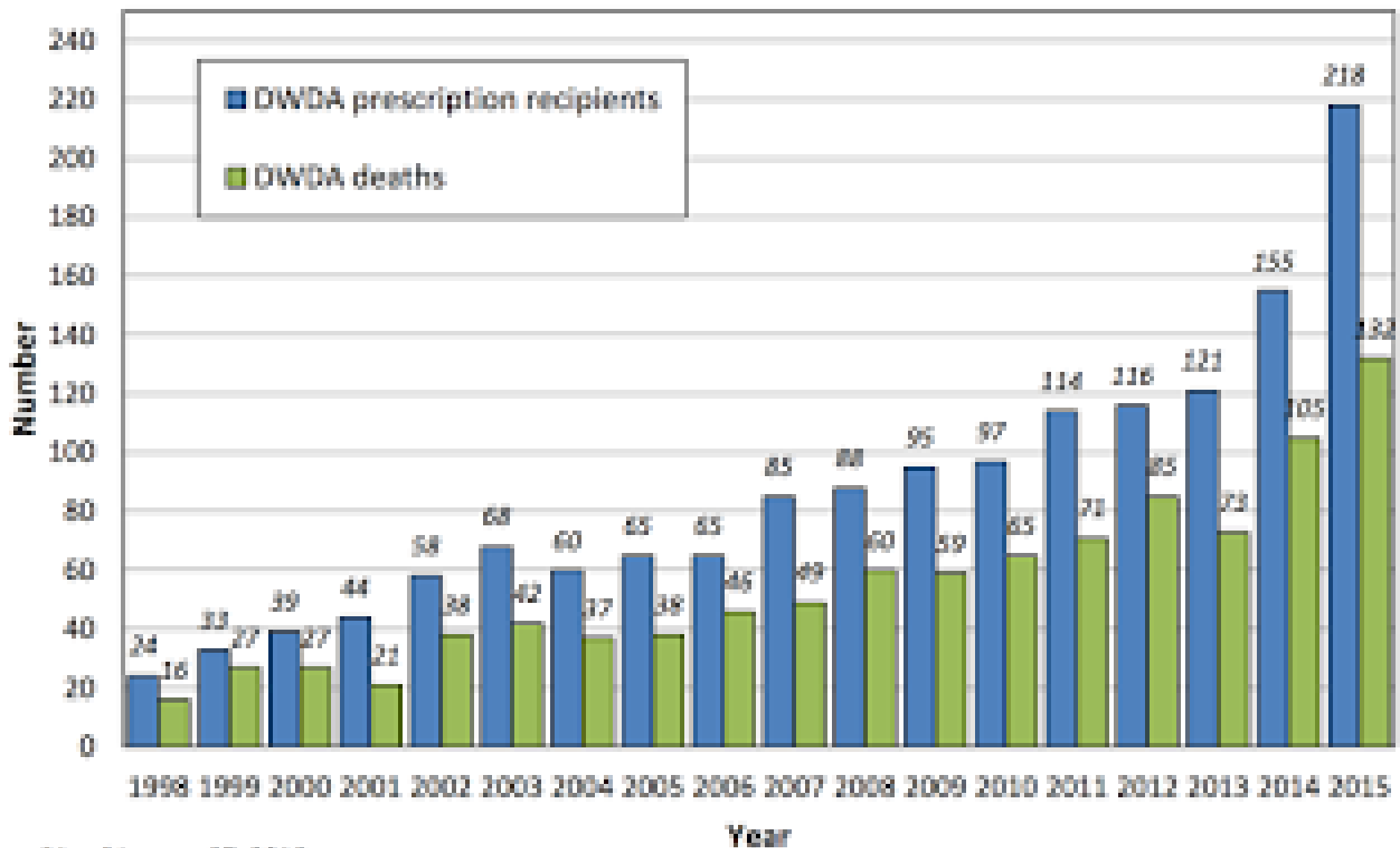


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Canadian doctors and nurse practitioners have reported that they have killed almost 4,000 (3,714) patients since euthanasia was legalized in Quebec in December 2015 — after which it was legalized throughout the country by Supreme Court fiat — an act of judicial hubris quickly formalized by Parliament.

**Figure 1: DWDA prescription recipients and deaths\*,  
by year, Oregon, 1998-2015**



\*As of January 27, 2016

 > News

## Guernsey rejects assisted dying after three day debate



St. Peter Port. Boats In The Marina CREDIT: UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP LIMITED / ALAMY



## Assisted dying

## Terminally ill Noel Conway loses challenge to assisted dying ban

Retired lecturer who has motor neurone disease loses case at UK court of appeal

Press Association

Wed 27 Jun 2018 10:52 BST



This article is over 1 month old



▲ The court of appeal judges emphasised their great respect for Noel Conway 'and the dignity and courage' he has shown. Photograph: Aaron Chown/PA

A terminally ill man with motor neurone disease who wants the right to an assisted death has lost his legal challenge at the UK court of appeal.

# Landmark ruling on end-of-life decisions for patients in a vegetative state

The Supreme Court says agreement between families and doctors should be sufficient when making a decision to end treatment.

14:55, UK,  
Monday 30 July 2018



Judges will no longer have to be consulted to stop end-of-life care for patients in a vegetative state

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# Falkland Islands become first overseas British territory to vote in support of assisted dying

Politicians passed a motion that terminally ill residents should have the right to end their life, subject to proper safeguards

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COMMENTS

By **Amy-Clare Martin**

23:37, 26 JUL 2018 | **UPDATED** 23:40, 26 JUL 2018

NEWS



The islands' Legislative Assembly also voted to consider changing laws if the UK first did the same (Image: Getty)



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## Doctors could be allowed to end the lives of patients with dementia or other degenerative diseases if they can't feed themselves, as one brand's medics' proposals 'the most chilling thing she's ever heard'

- The proposals mean patients who could otherwise survive years would die
- Removal of tubes mean an incapacitated patient will die of thirst and starvation
- Sian Vasey who has spinal muscular atrophy now worries about going to hospital

By [STEVE DOUGHTY](#) SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT FOR THE DAILY MAIL

PUBLISHED: 22:17, 13 August 2018 | UPDATED: 09:14, 14 August 2018



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# 'Personal Choice'

*'My life is dull, miserable, demeaning, undignified and intolerable... I should be able to decide how and when I end it'*

*(Tony Nicklinson)*



# 'Unbearable Pain'

*'The current law fails to address the fundamental question of why we should force terminally ill patients to go on in unbearable pain and with little quality of life'*

*(Archbishop George Carey)*





# 'Quality of Life'

*'I think when you need machines to help you breathe, then you have to ask questions about the quality of life being experienced and about the way money is being spent.'*

*(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)*



# 'Wasting resources'

*'If you're demented,  
you're wasting people's  
lives – your family's lives  
– and you're wasting the  
resources of the National  
Health Service.'*

*(Baroness Mary Warnock)*



# The International Scene

- ❑ Resisted multiple attempts to change the law – UK, US & Australia
- ❑ Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide legal – Canada, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg
- ❑ Assisted Suicide legal – Switzerland, Oregon, Washington, Vermont, California
- ❑ Battle just beginning – New Zealand, South Africa



# Definitions

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***Euthanasia** is where someone intentionally kills a person whose life is felt not to be worth living*

*Euthanasia can be voluntary, non-voluntary or involuntary*

***Assisted suicide** is where someone (eg. a doctor) helps someone else to end their own life*

# The Law in the UK

- Suicide Act (1961)

*It is a crime to 'encourage or assist' another person's suicide - **up to 14 years***

- Murder Law (Common law)

*It is a crime intentionally to take the life of another person even for compassionate motives – **mandatory life sentence***

# Discretion in sentencing

- ❑ Stephen Marshall  
– Murder (36 years)
- ❑ Frances Inglis  
– Murder (9 years)
- ❑ Kay Gilderdale  
– Assisted suicide  
(12 month conditional  
discharge)





# Euthanasia does not include...

- ❑ Stopping or not starting a medically useless treatment
- ❑ Pain relief when the intention is to kill the pain but not the patient (double effect)
- ❑ Refusal of medical treatment by a competent patient

# Three Euthanasia Bills 2014-2015

- ❑ Assisted Dying Bill (Lord Falconer - House of Lords)
  - Ran out of time
- ❑ Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill (Patrick Harvie MSP – Scottish Parliament)
  - Defeated in May 2015
- ❑ Assisted Dying (No 2) Bill (Rob Marris MP) – House of Commons
  - Defeated 11 September 2015



# Patrick Harvie's Scottish Bill

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- ❑ Assisted suicide for mentally competent adults > 16 with a 'terminal' or 'life-shortening' illness or 'condition' who find life 'unacceptable'
- ❑ Defeated May 2015



# Lord Falconer and Rob Marris

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- Allows assisted suicide for mentally competent adults with < 6 months to live
- Subject to consent of two doctors and a High Court judge
- Marris defeated 11 September 2015

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# UK Challenges in 2018

- ❑ Guernsey Parliament requette
- ❑ Conway Case – Court of Appeal
- ❑ Omid – High Court
- ❑ Y Case – Supreme Court
- ❑ Falkland Islands vote



# Upcoming UK challenges

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- ❑ Noel Conway – Supreme Court
- ❑ Isle of Man Parliament
- ❑ Jersey Parliament
- ❑ Scottish Parliament

# 1. Vulnerable people will feel pressure

- Any change in the law to allow assisted suicide or euthanasia would place **pressure on vulnerable people** to end their lives for fear of being a **financial, emotional or care burden** upon others. This would especially affect people who are disabled, elderly, sick or depressed.
- Carers, relatives and health professionals would also feel pressure to participate

## 2. Incremental extension is inevitable

- ❑ Autonomy and compassion arguments can be applied widely
- ❑ Proposed safeguards don't work and aren't safe
- ❑ Logical 'mission creep' using equality law
  - *Terminally ill to chronically ill*
  - *Adults to children*
  - *Mentally competent to mentally incompetent*



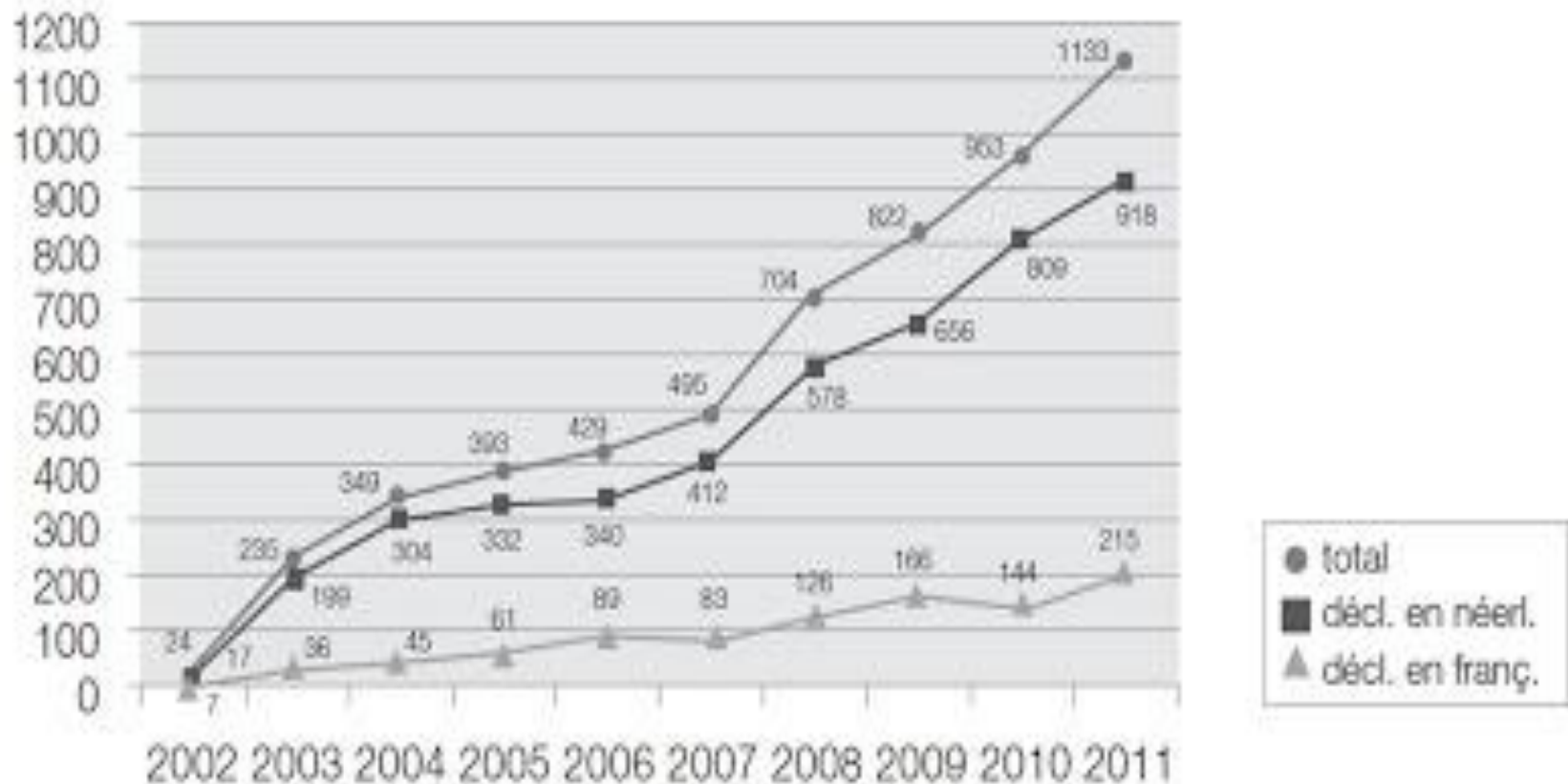
# Proposed safeguards don't work

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- 'terminally ill'
- 'mentally competent'
- 'adult'
- storage of lethal drugs
- witness statements
- record keeping

# Numbers – Belgium

Evolution du nombre annuel d'euthanasies enregistrées



# Belgium

- ❑ 50% of euthanasia nurses have killed without consent
- ❑ One third of cases are involuntary
- ❑ 50% of cases are unreported
- ❑ Euthanasia patients have been used as organ donors
- ❑ Has passed a law allowing euthanasia for minors
- ❑ Distressing personal cases – Ann G, Nancy Verhelst, Verbessum twins

### 3. Good Palliative Care is better

- Mum wanted to die, but convincing her to live gave us both a gift beyond measure...

(Baroness Ilora Finlay;  
*Daily Mail* 19 March  
2010)





# Symptoms can be relieved

- ❑ Pain, nausea and other distressing symptoms can be treated
- ❑ Less than ten in 20,000 dying patients have ongoing requests for 'assisted dying'
- ❑ It's about the person not the disease
- ❑ You can kill the pain without killing the patient

# The real reasons are not medical

- ❑ In Oregon the most common reasons for wanting assisted suicide are:
  - decreasing enjoyment of life (90.1%)
  - loss of autonomy (88.7%)
  - loss of dignity (74.6%)
- ❑ We should not be providing lethal injections for what are in reality spiritual problems!

# 4. The current law works well

- ❑ Strong deterrent
- ❑ Discretion in sentencing
- ❑ Discretion in prosecuting
- ❑ 'Stern face and kind heart'







# 23 Doctors at Nuremberg



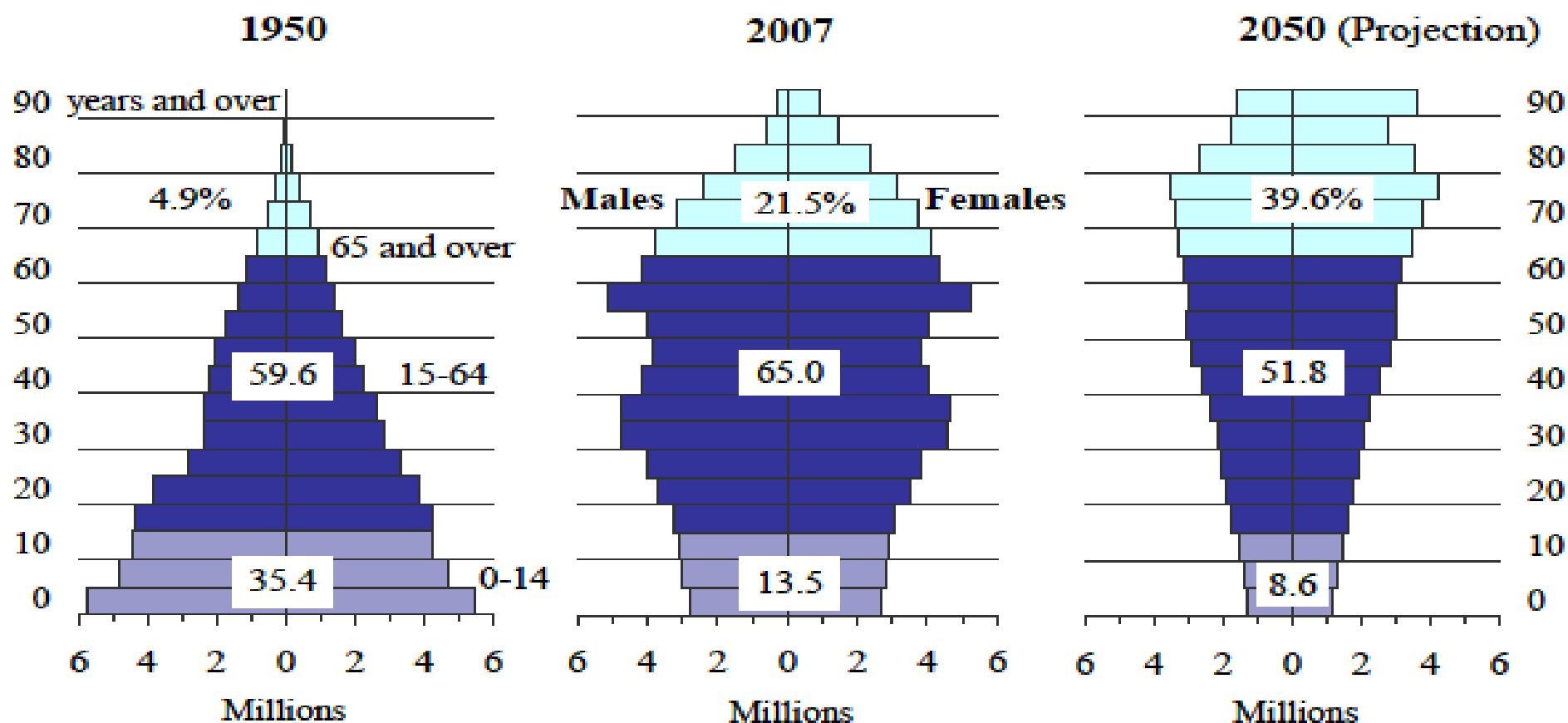
# Why a holocaust?

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- ❑ The Western Demographic Crisis
- ❑ The International Debt Crisis
- ❑ The Collapse of Western Society
- ❑ The rise of Atheism and Secular Humanism

# 1. The demographic time-bomb

**Figure 2.3**  
**Changes in the Population Pyramid**



Source: Statistics Bureau, MIC; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

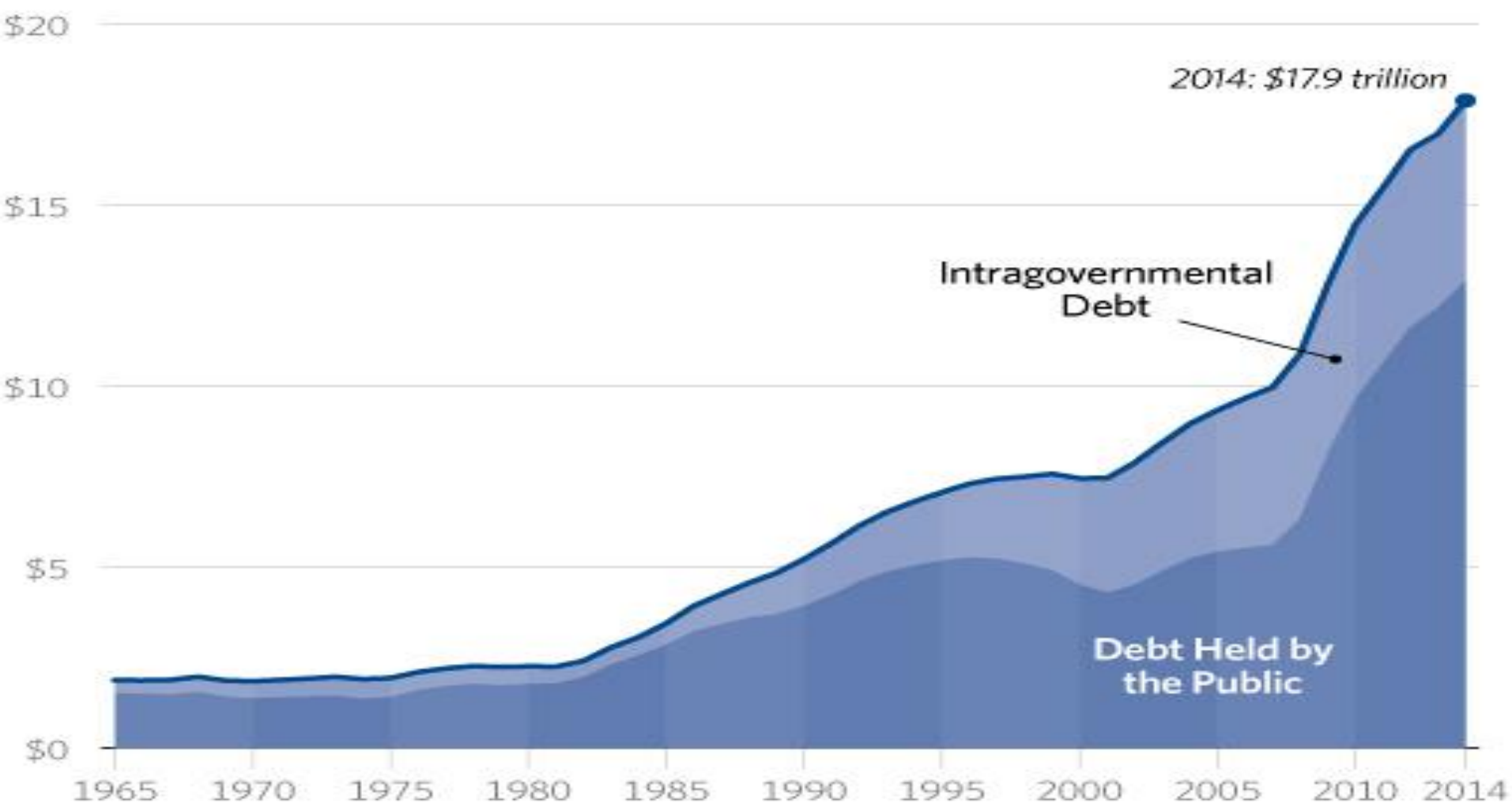
## 2. The international debt crisis





# U.S. National Debt Approaches \$18 Trillion

IN TRILLIONS OF 2014 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS



**Source:** U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2015: Historical Tables*, 2014, pp. 144-145, Table 7.1, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Historicals/> (accessed September 17, 2014).

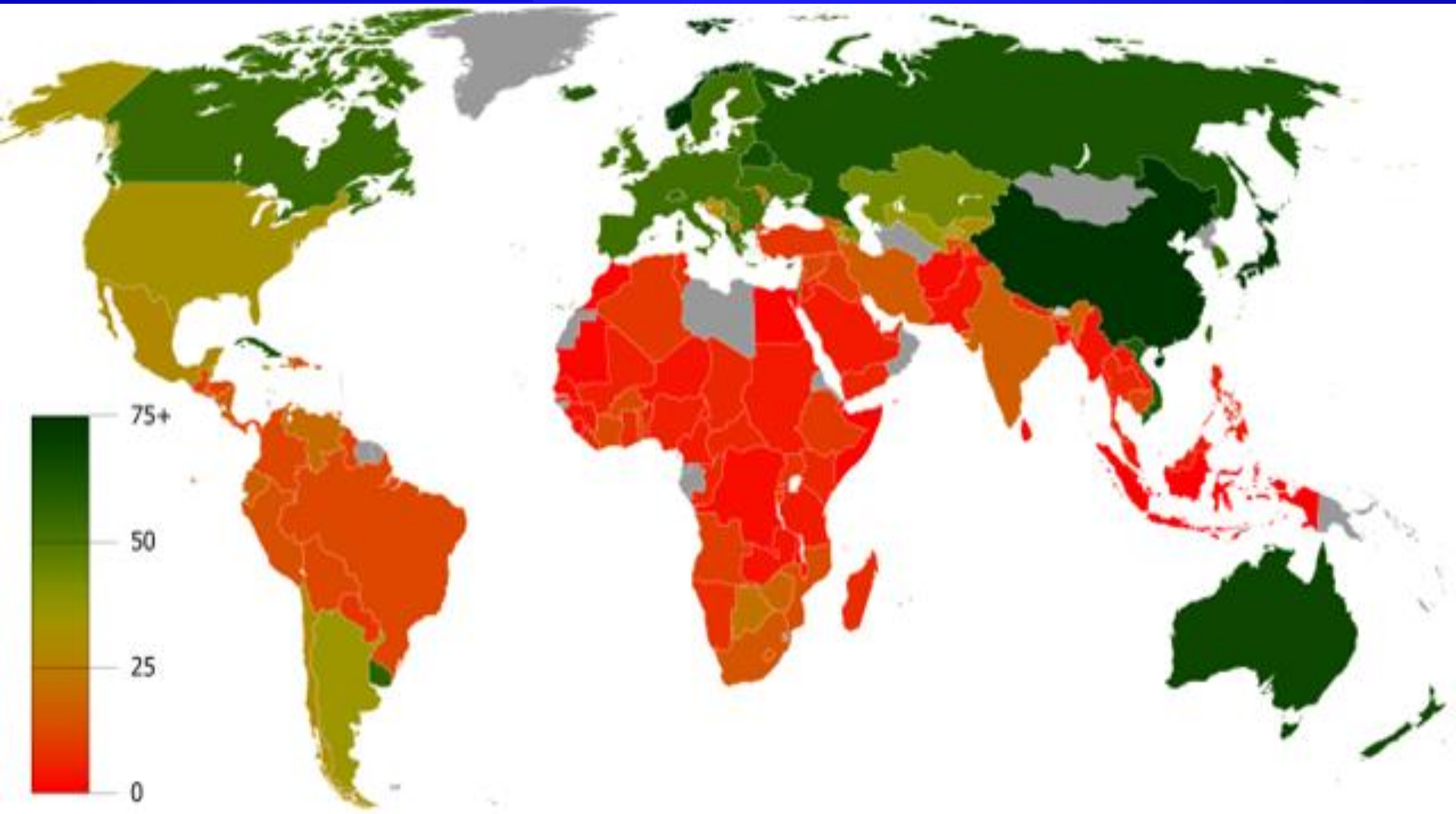
# 3. The breakdown of Western society

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## □ Breakdown Britain - The five pathways to poverty

- Family breakdown
- Economic dependency
- Indebtedness
- Addiction
- Educational failure

## 4. The advance of atheism



# **7 MOUNTAINS OF CULTURE**

1. *EDUCATION*
2. *ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT*
3. *GOVERNMENT*
4. *FAMILY*
5. *RELIGION*
6. *BUSINESS*
7. *MEDIA*



# Euthanasia in the Bible

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- Abimelech - 'death with dignity'  
(Judges 9:54-57)
- Saul – 'put out of his agony'  
(2 Samuel 1:1-16)

# Human Dignity (Gen 1:26, 27; Ps 24:1)



□ Michelangelo

□ Sydenham



# Evil (Gen 3:1-24; Rom 3:9-20)

- ❑ The Fall of Man
- ❑ Human beings are capable of great evil...
- ❑ ... so laws are needed to protect the innocent



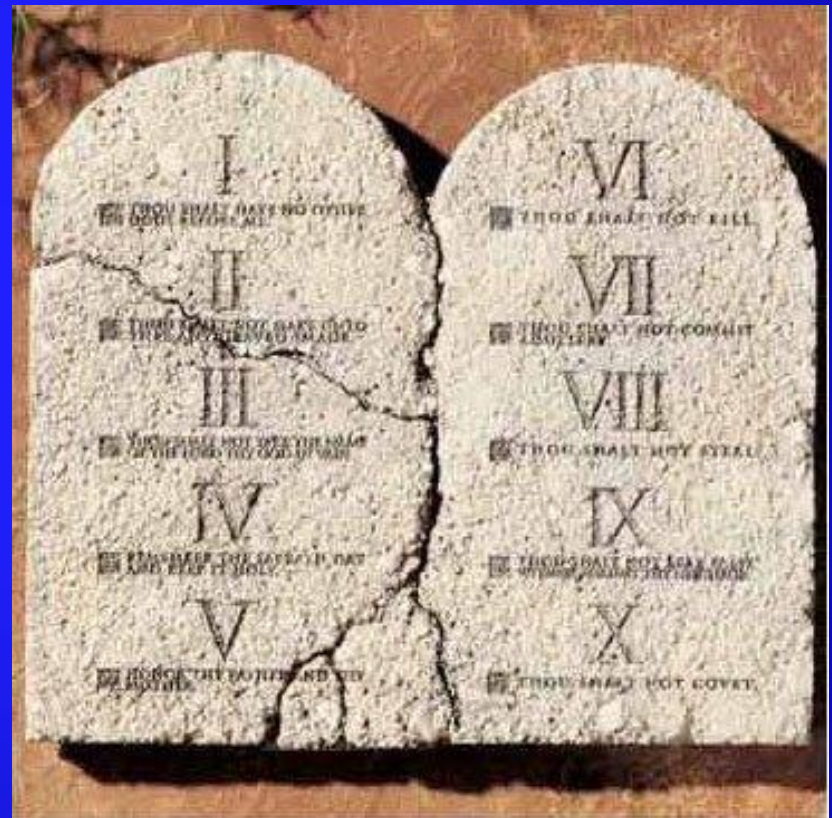


# Morality (Gen 9:6; Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17)

You shall not kill

Taking the life of  
innocent human  
being is forbidden –  
even on request

(Genesis 9:6; Exodus  
20:13; Saul and  
Abimelech)





# The sanctity of life

- All human beings are made in the image of God (Gen 1:27)
- Taking the life of innocent human being intentionally is forbidden – even on request (Gen 9:6, 7; Ex 20:13)
- The Bible only sanctions the killing of 'guilty' human beings in specific circumstances (capital punishment, holy war, self-defence)
- *Ratsach* and *Phoneuo* - (Ex 21:12-14; Lv 24:17-21; Nu 35:16-31; Dt 19:4-13)

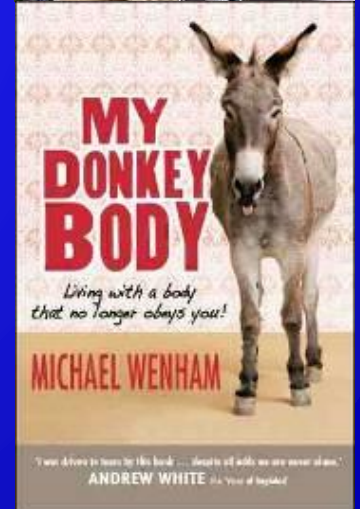
# The rule of law (Romans 13:1-7)

- ❑ Human beings are capable of great evil...
- ❑ ... so laws are needed to protect the innocent
- ❑ And governments are needed to frame them



# Faith (Heb 11:1,6; Rom 5:1-11)

- ❑ Without faith it is impossible to please God
- ❑ We need to see life through the eyes of faith
- ❑ We need to understand suffering with faith's perspective

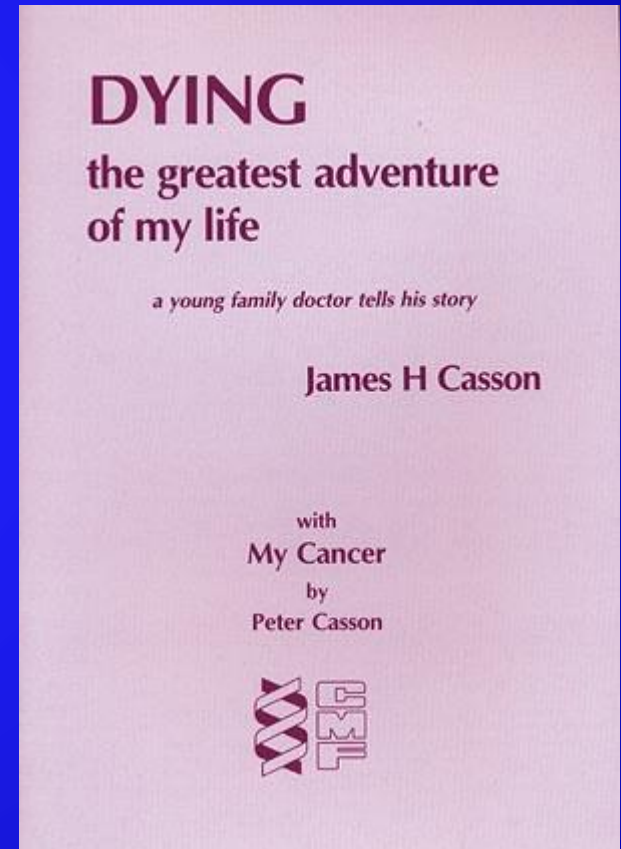


# Hope (2 Cor 4:16-5:12; 1 Thes 4:13-18)



□ Shawshank Redemption

□ Matt Hampson





# Love (Jn 13:34-35; Gal 6:2)

- Sacrificial care
- Tough love
- Transforming love



# Four pitfalls for Christians

- ❑ Situation Ethics - 'All that matters is love'
- ❑ Cheap grace - 'We are not under law but grace '
- ❑ Diversity - 'Ethics is a secondary issue over which Christians may disagree'
- ❑ Personal pietism - 'The world is not our problem and we should not impose our morality'

# Situation Ethics

- ❑ Situation ethics says, 'All that matters is love' (Joseph Fletcher)
- ❑ It's true that love sums up the law (Mt 22:37-40; Gal 5:6, 14)
- ❑ But love goes beyond the law (Mt 5:20, 23:23; 1 Cor 4:16, 11:1; Eph 5:1,2; 1 Jn 2:6)
- ❑ And the law against killing is upheld in the NT (Mt 5:21-22; Rom 13:9,10; Jas 2:8-11; Rev 21:8,22:15)

# Cheap grace

- ❑ Cheap grace says, 'We are not under law but grace '
- ❑ It's true that we are saved by grace through faith and not by good works (Rom 5:1,2; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:8,9)
- ❑ But genuine faith is evidenced by repentance (turning from sin) and a changed life (Gal 5:16-26; Eph 2:10; Jas 2:14-26)



# Diversity

- Diversity says, 'Ethics is a secondary issue over which Christians may disagree'
- It's true that there are secondary issues over which Christians may legitimately disagree (Rom 14; 1 Cor 8:1-13, 10:23-33)
- But this is nowhere taught about the shedding of innocent blood (Mt 5:21-22; Rom 13:9,10; Jas 2:8-11; Rev 21:8,22:15)

# Personal Pietism

- ❑ Personal pietism says, 'The world is not our problem and we should not impose our morality'
- ❑ It is true that we are not of this world but citizens of God's Kingdom (Heb 11:16; 1 Pet 2:9,10)
- ❑ But as aliens and exiles we are to seek the good of the city in which we are placed (1 Pet 2:11-17; Je 29:7) and have a duty to seek justice (Mi 6:8; Amos 5:14,15,24; Pr 31:8,9)

# Difficult Questions

